



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Fri., Nov. 7, 2014, 10:30 a.m.

**CONTACT**

Jen Rae Wang, Gov.'s Ofc., 402-471-1967

Charles Isom, Gov.'s Ofc., 402-471-1970

Anne Byers, NITC, 402-471-3805

## **Lt. Gov. Nelson Announces “Broadband in Nebraska” Plan**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Today, Lt. Governor John Nelson announced the release of a state broadband plan. *Broadband in Nebraska: Current Landscape and Recommendations* lays out a vision for broadband in Nebraska, sets goals and makes recommendations to further broadband development in Nebraska.

“Broadband is important to Nebraska’s businesses and communities,” said Lt. Governor Nelson, who chairs the Nebraska Information Technology Commission. “This plan builds on Nebraska’s successes in stimulating investment in Nebraska’s telecommunications infrastructure and encouraging the use of broadband in businesses, agriculture, health care, education, libraries, local government, and public safety entities. Additionally, the plan highlights the need to encourage more youth to pursue careers in information technology.”

Broadband availability in Nebraska has improved over the past three years with 99.5 percent of Nebraskans now having access to service with download speeds of greater than 10 Mbps. Household adoption of broadband has also increased to 82 percent of Nebraska households subscribing to broadband. Mobile connections are becoming increasingly important to residents and businesses with more than 80 percent of Nebraska businesses currently using smart phone technology.

The plan sets goals for broadband availability and adoption for 2020, including having broadband service of 25 Mbps down available to 90 percent of Nebraska households and having more than 90 percent of Nebraska households subscribe to broadband. In 2013, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and an international broadband expert company, conducted a survey of Nebraska businesses on their use of the Internet. Respondents to the survey indicated that 25% to 45% of revenue from the Internet. Information on the survey is available at <http://broadband.nebraska.gov/broadband-business-survey>.

“Broadband has been a notable factor in Nebraska’s economic growth with more than 60 percent of Nebraska businesses selling goods and services online,” said Lt. Governor Nelson. “The continued development of Nebraska’s telecommunications infrastructure is vital to Nebraska’s future.”

Additionally, the plan includes 10 recommendations: Encourage investment in Nebraska’s telecommunications infrastructure; Enhance the capacity of local communities to address broadband development; Encourage the development of a skilled IT workforce; Support innovation and entrepreneurship; Support the use of broadband technologies in businesses and agriculture; Support the development of libraries as community anchor institutions; Support the use of broadband in education and health care; Support the use of broadband by government and public safety entities; Support efforts to attract new residents and retain youth; and Increase digital literacy and broadband access to the Internet.

Brenda Decker, the Chief Information Officer for Nebraska, added, “Broadband is an important component to the overall success of Nebraska. By continuing to deploy broadband and utilize new technology, Nebraska continues to experience great successes in a vast array of areas that positively impact the lives of our citizens.”

The development of a state broadband plan is the culmination of a five-year broadband mapping and planning initiative funded by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Partners in the Nebraska Broadband Initiative include the Nebraska Information Technology Commission, Nebraska Public Service Commission, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Department of Economic Development, and AIM.

The plan is available from the Nebraska Information Technology Commission’s website ([http://www.nitc.ne.gov/news/community/broadband\\_plan.html](http://www.nitc.ne.gov/news/community/broadband_plan.html)). Broadband in Nebraska, a [video](#) produced by the University of Nebraska, highlights the findings of the plan and is available on YouTube.

The Nebraska Information Technology Commission is a state commission whose members work to promote the use of information technology in education, health care, economic development, and all levels of government services to improve the quality of life of all Nebraskans.

###.